

PEACE NEWS

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Contradictions in French Policy

FRANCE, and French policy, are an enigma. At Moscow, M. Bidault blandly assured the conference that if the French plan for Germany were accepted, imports and exports would be balanced and there would be a surplus for reparations in 1949. Since the first article in the French plan is the maximum of coal exports from the Ruhr, and the second (consequently) is the minimum of German industrial production, this is plain nonsense: of the good old kind which used to be talked by Poincaré in the years following 1918, and was so disastrous in its effects.

On the other hand, the Monnet plan for the reconstruction of the French economy—as a plan—shows quite unusual economic enlightenment. True, it is proving much more difficult to implement than was anticipated by its

COMMENTARY

by

John Middleton Murry

enthusiastic promoter in January last. Nevertheless, the gulf between the mentality which conceived it and that which engendered the Bidault plan for Germany is so vast that it passes comprehension that they could be propounded by the same government. One is compelled to deduce a condition of national schizophrenia.

Indo-China—French illusion

ONE is forced to much the same conclusion by considering the issue which caused the latest cabinet crisis in France: Indo-China. There the fact of the matter is that the French Communists alone have been supporting a policy towards Indo-China which is roughly the same (though less advanced) as that which the British government has pursued towards Burma, with the general support of the British public. If this is a sane and reasonable policy for Britain towards Burma, it follows that for France, whose position is notably weaker even than Britain's, it is imperative that she should adopt a similar policy towards Indo-China. Nothing of the kind. Even the Communists had to compromise and permit their ministers in the Ramadier government to support the reactionary and obsolete colonial policy.

There appears to be an obstinate refusal, on the part of a majority of the French, to admit the realities of the situation. France must be "a Great Power" and must behave as though she were one. And apparently de Gaulle is seriously preparing to make a bid for power, hoping to return on a wave of this negative nostalgia; and he may succeed. Yet in spite of this political illusionism, there is a good deal of evidence that Frenchmen are tackling the task of economic reconstruction with more resolution than we are ourselves. The enigma remains.

Common ground

I WAS gratified to read in The Tribune (Mar. 28) these sensible words:

"There is no intelligible sense in which democratic Socialism can be said to be opposed to Liberalism in the same way in which both are distinguished from the kind of regime under which individuals, groups and entire peoples can be uprooted and deported by a police despotism if they happen to attract the unfavourable attention of their rulers. In maintaining those conditions of freedom which alone make possible the growth of higher forms of social

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

A CONSCRIPT BRITAIN?

We, whose resistance is firmly rooted in the renunciation of war, will make no truce with conscription

THE National Service Bill is having a stormy passage. Shaken by the opposition expressed on the second reading, the Government has now reduced the period of conscription from eighteen months to a year. This compromise will not strengthen its hand. On the contrary, those who oppose the Bill on principle will be less, rather than more, submissive; whilst those who supported it will point out—with obvious justice—that if conscription is adopted at all, it should be made effective, and that if eighteen months was not the minimum period necessary, why was it ever proposed?

The case for conscription is really simple and strong. The only people qualified to judge whether new weapons have made large forces obsolete, the military experts, have as yet reached no agreement. All that is certain is that Britain is now "a land-power." Should war break out, even supposing she was not allied with one of the belligerents, she might find herself in the position of Finland in 1939—which only escaped the fate of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia through the possession of a trained Reserve.

No clear case

It is regrettable that no such clear case was put by any representative of the Government (let alone the Opposition), in the Commons debate last week. Only Mr. Crossman seemed to have grasped it. The Minister of Labour, introducing the Bill, did little more than outline its (very reasonable) provisions, and propose that conscripts be dubbed "national servicemen," for the sake of those "who do not like the connotation of the word." (It would seem more reasonable for such people to do away with the connotation—but that is another point).

Conscription was justified on the ground of "commitments to Uno," which apparently fall on no other country; on the ground of "democracy," as though a volunteer-army were not open to all classes; on the ground that service was a "privilege," which the Government nevertheless regretted having to confer — on almost every ground, in fact, except the clear and logical one.

However, there is no reason to suppose that, even if a clear and forthright case had been made out for the Bill, the debate would have been more consecutive and relevant. (Pity the poor reporter who has to flounder across the shallows of platitude, the mud-flats of illogic, the shingle of party-scores, which make up the seascape of Hansard.) For, it must be confessed, the opponents of conscription were mostly no less confused. Patriotic they were, indeed. Mr. Clement Davies was proud, "ineffably proud, of the fact that I was fortunate enough to be born in this Empire"—though just why an accident of birth should be an object of pride I never have been able to learn. Mr. Lang is a Britisher too: it follows that "we are the finest people in the world. If that is bad Socialism or bad Internationalism, I must be forgiven." (Why?)

Backs to Keir Hardie

Loyal to their tradition the Labour rebels were too. Sorrow and astonishment filled the House over Labour's apostasy from Keir Hardie—a little belatedly, perhaps, seeing that Labour parted company with Keir Hardy when it ceased to condemn war itself. But neither traditionalism nor patriotism of this sort constitutes an overwhelming case, in the eyes of a pacifist at least. And certainly it is difficult not to share Mr. Stanley's mistrust of "those people who, while prepared to admit that compulsory service may be morally right in war-time, are also prepared to insist that it is morally wrong in peace."

It was left to Mr. Stamford and Mr. Hopkin Morris to approach the heart of the matter.

"Today, in existing circumstances," (Mr. Stamford pointed out), "there is as good a case for industrial compulsion as for military conscription. I am not at all sure

that there is not an even better case. The right hon. Member for Woodford (Mr. Churchill) yesterday affected to see a great gulf fixed between military and industrial conscription. I believe that that distinction is completely unreal. What is the logic of conscription? It is that every man should serve where the needs of the country require him, in any capacity, whatever it may be, provided the national interests require it."

That argument is incontrovertible, and sooner or later, we may be very sure, the supporters of military conscription, Conservative if not Labour, will realise it and turn it to account.

There is no earthly reason why any principle approved of for meeting the emergencies of war should not be approved of for meeting the emergencies of peace. Indeed, the New Statesman is only playing a variant on the familiar "Dunkirk spirit" theme when it recommends the Government to adopt "emergency powers at least as large as those assumed in 1940:" for it is sometimes forgotten that Dunkirk was enacted to the tune of "There are Fascists at the bottom of our garden"—just as it is forgotten that it is only that obverse of the Dunkirk spirit which we abhor in Soviet Communism.

Logic of conscription

But the logic of conscription goes further even than Mr. Stamford pursued it. For the logic of conscription is that every man should commit any deed, whatever it may be, provided the national interests require it. It

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only remains for that principle to be applied to the emergencies of peace for totalitarianism to be realised in all its savagery.

Subservient beings

Conscription, in short, not only promotes the economic crisis upon which totalitarianism thrives, but furnishes an unanswerable argument for totalitarianism, in the ear of all those who have sanctioned it—including the conscripts themselves. That is why Mr. Hopkin Morris could truthfully say: "Italy and Germany reverted to the views of the old world by making the citizen a completely subservient being to the State with the State having complete control over the whole of life. That is reversion, and that is what we are faced with at the present time." And that is why we, whose resistance is firmly rooted in the renunciation of war, will make no truce with conscription.

There was one surprise in the debate last week: Lieut. Col. Price White announced that, although a Conservative, he could not vote for a measure to which his constituents had shown themselves opposed. Evidently Hon. Members are not always so deaf to deputations and resolutions as they sometimes make us believe. Let us congratulate the voters of Caernarvon Boroughs on their energetic example, and drawing fresh hope from it, intensify our own campaigns against this national degradation.



All letters on other than editorial matters
should be addressed to the Manager

Moral Anarchy

UPON two measures the United Nations have shown themselves united. The first was the indictment of the Nazi leaders on a charge, among others, of forcibly deporting the inhabitants of occupied territories; the second was the forcible deportation of some ten million German nationals from territories occupied by themselves.

These ten million deportees, mostly old people, women and children (for their young men were already prisoners), expelled from their homes in eastern Europe, crammed, practically without food, warmth or sanitation, into the railway-wagons that have proved for hundreds both cradles and coffins, constitute a standing witness to the moral anarchy of our time.

No principle unites the United Nations, except the principle of power. For it is not the Russians, Poles and Czechoslovakians alone who are responsible for this crime against humanity: it was approved by Churchill and Truman at Potsdam, when the frontier of Germany was fixed, and the Atlantic Charter repudiated.

Whether Churchill ever intended that Charter seriously, we may never know. Whether it was simply one more lie to induce men to sacrifice their lives, or whether only unforeseen events prevented its implementation, the lesson is exactly the same: that modern war is incompatible with any principle whatever.

But moral anarchy has now issued in political deadlock. The Americans and British will not agree to a massive industrialisation of western Germany, which might enable her to support these millions, because that would involve an export-drive in competition with themselves, or a tie-up between the German and Soviet economies. The Russians will not agree to a restoration of the eastern territories, because by doing so they would lose their grip on the Poles and Czechs, as well as bait to a Communist Germany.

Whether there is any way out of this deadlock, we cannot guess. The French offer, to receive workers as immigrants, has been unfavourably viewed in Germany—and there is a very good reason for this. It is not (as one newspaper suggests) that the Germans want to keep men of military age: they want to keep men of marriageable age, in a country where family-life is already disintegrating through the disproportion of women to men.

This much, however, does seem certain: that no solution to the problem should be rejected merely because it threatens the "unity" of the Allies. If, by repudiating Potsdam, refusing to accept the new frontiers as final, and urging the return of the deportees, we can do something even now to atone for our ruthlessness, and bring them a measure of relief or respect, our Government should not hesitate to adopt this course. It is far better that two Powers should be united on a moral principle, than that three should be united on none.

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Is there a danger of A NEW HITLER?

RECENTLY I visited the place where Hitler and Eva Braun were cremated. As I looked at the snow-and-ice-covered ground, a German, working amongst the rubble and dust of the former Reich Chancellory, approached me and asked if I wanted to see the bunker where Hitler and Eva Braun had committed suicide.

Accompanied by a British naval officer who was on his way back from Moscow to London, we went down the bunker's stairs. The German lit a candle, as it was pitch-dark inside the large empty hall, where, as he explained to us, the Fuhrer had made his last attempt to end his life.

After staying a few minutes in the cold and darkness of the bunker, I asked the German if he thought the Fuhrer was really dead.

"It's hard to say, Mister, I don't think so."

"So you think the Fuhrer is still alive?"

Carefully he answered, "Yes," and the British officer added that public opinion in Moscow still believes in the existence of Hitler.

It seemed to me that the opinion from Moscow had even found its way into the Russian sector of Berlin, as the German Chancellory is situated in the Russian sector there.

Product of a crisis

The important question today, however, is not whether Hitler still lives, but whether there is the danger of a new Hitler.

It is well-known that the appearance of Hitler on the political horizon of Germany was due to a world-wide economic crisis, from which Germany was suffering during 1930-33, a crisis supported by a political instability inside and outside the borders of Germany. To this was added the Treaty of Versailles, which neither led Germany to freedom nor split the death warrant of the German militarist class.

Between 1919 and 1933 Germany was a democracy without democrats. During this epoch the Allies failed to realise where a democracy without democrats could lead, and even after Germany had abolished the democratic principles which were laid down in the Weimar Constitution, they countenanced Hitler's dictatorial methods, until they were powerless to bring them to a standstill without using military force. These well-known facts have to be remembered when we seek an answer to the question, "Is there a danger of a new Hitler?"

From a military point of view, the reply of every foreign observer who

has travelled through Germany since the end of the second world war, is No. Without hesitation, I can predict that whatever her future borders, the Reich will not become a military power in our life-time. But what of the psychological development inside Germany?

At the present we find in Germany the most contradictory characterist-

by
GERD TREUHAF

ics. In cities like Dortmund and Frankfurt, the Germans regard the occupation armies as their oppressors; they defy them whenever they have an opportunity. It seemed to me that their co-operation with the allied authorities was certainly not sincere. On the other hand, you find the Germans in Berlin like slaves; they regard the four occupying powers as their new "Master Race," and their obedience, which reflects a deep inferiority complex, is no less unhealthy a factor. Both these characteristics lend themselves to the rise of another Hitler. The Westerners will always have the last word in the argument, saying that the occupation of Germany won't last for ever. The obedient crowd, who call you Mister three times in one sentence, are the potential followers of any Fuhrer who is able to increase their living standard and give them their real freedom.

Allies' failure

So far it seems to me, the allied powers have failed to find a way of counter-attacking these two tendencies. On the contrary, when you see, for example, American soldiers in Frankfurt carrying about their weekly cigarette and sweet rations, including pineapples and luxury foods, which the Germans have not seen for years, then you begin to wonder if the increasing bad feeling of the people towards the occupying powers is not to some extent justified.

So far there is no such thing as a strong Nazi underground movement, but the hope of the German people for a strong Chancellor of a

little surprise. But isn't it time that our prelates began to realise that it is their duty to uphold the decalogue instead of adapting it to the amoral drift of the times?

Why not teach the simple fact that adultery and not divorce is the evil

LETTERS

to be overcome? The moral courage behind such a declaration of unpopular truth would be respected by the average man, and might help to revive his confidence in a Church which seems bent on betraying its trust and foundation.

ESME WYNNE-TYSON.

Kildare,
Sydney Gardens, Bath.

Was Labour guilty

H. GARDINER'S amendment of his dates is somewhat meaningless as he still holds Labour's leaders responsible for 1932-3, when they were out of office.

As for his insistence on Labour as "a willing instrument" for introducing economy cuts, means test, and the remedy of "increasing poverty in the midst of plenty," I can only say as a voluntary propagandist in a small way for Labour in the early 'thirties, that his statement is completely in conflict with the facts as I saw and explained them.

I suggest further that your readers who have any political memory of fifteen years ago will accept George Lansbury's repudiation before H. Gardiner's accusation. Perhaps Wilfred Wellock who at that time—and before—was fighting in the fore-

DAILY HERALD

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united Germany is very visible; and although this desire does not amount to a wish for a new Hitler, there may be a tremendous change during forthcoming months, especially if the Moscow conference is a failure from the German point of view.

There can be no establishment of a workable German government so long as the zonal system is in existence, and the German currency, is cigarettes. Further, no future German Chancellor will be able to rely on the confidence of the German people if the present German border in the East, the Neisse-Oder border, becomes an accomplished fact. It is here that history may repeat itself. For let us remember that if the Western democracies had made only half the political and economic concessions to the German Chancellor Muller or the German Foreign Minister Stresemann, which they later on made to Adolph Hitler, world history might have followed a different course. These historical verdicts should certainly not be ignored in our future treatment of Germany.

Out of a political and economic chaos, with disease and starvation and a psychological apathy towards world affairs, the German people are crying for a saviour, but not, as yet, for a Hitler. If however their appeal for economic help is vain, and the death roll from disease and starvation increases, and they lose all faith in the Western Powers, they may find a new Fuhrer to follow, not from political conviction but from the sheer necessity of personal survival. Again they may sacrifice the principles of humanity and freedom, which are the basis of democracy: because these principles lose their meaning for a people whose bare existence is at stake.

Therefore, only 25 per cent. of the answer to my question, "Is there a danger of a new Hitler?" is to be found inside the ruins of Berlin, and 75 per cent. in Moscow, Paris, Washington and London.

front of the Labour Movement will spare a line or two for "Peace News" to settle whether Mr. Gardiner's or my own is the correct interpretation of Labour's responsibility in those terrible and insane years, when humanity was destitute in a world of abundance.

I would not wish to see the Labour Movement left uncriticised where it has been at fault: in its attitude to the war, etc., I have vehemently done so; but let use be careful to value what is good and to refrain from attacking unless we are on sure and truthful ground.

JOSEPH JACKSON:

19 Coombe Gardens,
Ensbury Park, Bournemouth, N.

Reminiscent of 1939

ONE cannot but regret Middleton Murry's approval of President Truman's threat to Russia with its sinister reminder of Lord Halifax's "Halt! Major road ahead!" to Hitler in 1939.

One would be glad if surprise could equal regret, but Mr. Murry's animus against Russia is becoming so marked that it colours all his thought. There is much in the Soviet methods with which one can have little if any sympathy, but there are peaceful ways of dealing with such difficulties. To treat the Soviet government as a bitter and dangerous enemy is to betray the future by making a terrible war the more likely. Therefore it is surprising to find such provocative and bellicose "Commentary" in "Peace News."

EDWARD G. SMITH.

18 Bedford Avenue,
Barnet, Herts.

Democracy, how long...?

FROM FREDRICK LOHR

Rome, Mar. 20, 1947.

RECENT proceedings of Italy's Constituent Assembly indicate that the Communist voice in parliament is far more powerful than the British Press acknowledges.

On March 18 it was openly charged on the floor of the Assembly that de Gasperi's government was powerless to prevent a Communist reign of terror, which Right wing Deputies actually claim has already begun.

De Gasperi has said that Italy must be prepared to accommodate a considerable portion of Communist policy, but Right wing spokesmen are insisting that recent developments show more than a mere willingness on the part of the Christian Democrats to collaborate with the Communists in a "national" policy. They accuse de Gasperi's party of being afraid of the Communists and fearful to check the excesses of extremists.

On March 14, Franco de Agazio, editor of an anti-Communist newspaper, was assassinated outside his home in traditional gangster style. The Right wing accuses the Communists of this killing, and alleges as the reason for it, Agazio's identification of the communist who killed Mussolini, and "converted" his "treasure" into CP funds.

At Civitavecchia the Uomo Qualunque Party recently opened a new office. Within a short time it was wrecked in a Qualunque—Left-extremist battle. In a fiery speech to an uproarious Assembly, Benedetti, editor of the Rome paper, Il Giornale della Sera, accused the government of permitting a situation to develop which might be the prelude even to civil war.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Communist influence is gaining ground, despite Italy's virtual dependence on the USA.

I feel confirmed in my original impression that as time goes on, and particularly if Italian economics should be deprived of continual foreign subsidy, the numerous small parties in Italy will be swept away, and a straight fight ensue between Communists and L'Uomo Qualunque.

In any case, no matter what occurs, it seems to me that democracy in Italy (as we understand it), has no chance of survival without foreign backing. I am beginning to doubt the practical ability of democracy in times of crisis; it works well in prosperous countries, but it seems to me that unless, by some means, the big Powers can reach a genuine accord on the lines of a political and economic European federation, democracy on the Continent is not likely to last much longer.

It will be fatal to restore the old foundations of

OUR ECONOMIC LIFE

WILFRED WELLOCK, in his article of March 28, has provided us with a mission, which, if carried through with zeal, might yet save humanity.

What Wilfred Wellock is asking us to do is to face the fact that the old way of economic life with all its implications in moral and spiritual life has ended. Nor is he saying it because of the present crisis. He has been saying it for years. But the point is, does this nation want to end its present way of life? Perhaps even more pertinent is the question: How many people have ever taken the trouble to understand what is the present way of economic life?

I raise this because of a recurring sentence in the Government's White Paper in which is outlined their suggestions for carrying the nation through this immediate crisis. This sentence has been much quoted in the various appeals and reads; "that unless there is a greater output per man year and an increase in exports, it will be impossible to restore the foundations of our national life."

Because of that sentence in the White Paper. I join with Wellock in stating that no political Government can take us through this crisis on those lines. For one thing, the old foundations of our national life are gone. Nobody can restore them, and it would be fatal if they did restore them.

The collapse

The foundations are gone because they were bad foundations. On bad foundations we had erected a vicious super-structure, and when they could no longer carry the burden of the super-structure, both super-structure and foundations collapsed.

Now let us see what are the foundations of our economic life. One foundation was briefly described by Mr. Stanley Baldwin when he was called on by the nation to pull us through the crisis of 1931. On that occasion Mr. Baldwin said: "Our nation has lived for a century upon its credit. It has been the greatest credit in the world and has been built up generation after generation."

That, then, is one of the foundations of our national life. The question is not only can we restore it, but should we restore it. It may have been a good credit in Mr. Baldwin's eyes, but what did it imply? If we had to be the centre of credit, we had to be the world's Money Centre. To be the world's Money Centre meant that foreigners lodged their money in London at a certain rate of interest, and London lent it out again, at a higher rate to foreigners.

Make no mistake, that was the foundation of our national economic life. Every economic crisis since

says

JOHN SCANLON

that foundation was laid, has been due to the fact that foreign financiers withdrew their money from London. In addition, the rivalry between the financial houses in London, Paris, Berlin and New York, has been one of the most potent causes of war.

But now I hear someone say that there will never be another money crisis so long as Hugh Dalton is Chancellor. And I agree that if we were a self-supporting nation Hugh Dalton would prevent a money crisis. But whilst the Government can determine the amount of money it shall have within its realm, it cannot determine the value of its money outside the realm.

No more interest

Now see where that leads us. The old money-lending foundation, which provided us through interest charges, with £250 millions worth of raw materials, has gone. When we buy raw materials in the world markets in a hard currency country we can only buy with a currency convertible into gold dollars.

When the Bretton Woods Agreement is implemented, all countries will be hard currency countries. Remember, too, that in the late Lord Keynes' exposition of the Bretton Woods Agreement, this applies to, external and internal currency.

There, then, is one foundation, which will not be easily restored, and should not be restored even if we could do it. What is the alternative? The alternative is to increase our exports, but increasing our exports has been one of the foundations of our national life. It grew up with the Credit System. We had nearly a hundred years start over other nations. We had the goods and the credits to lend to foreigners to buy the goods, but for over 100 years, Britain has had more imports than exports. We paid our way, and made a profit by lending, insurance, shipping, etc. Look at any country today. What articles can Britain make that cannot be made in nearly every country in the world? Even the call to jump in and take advantage of the sellers' market is a gospel of despair. It is an admission that there is no permanent market. That way of life is all wrong.

If we look at our histories, we will find that the call to capture the sellers' market was issued after Waterloo, after 1870, and after 1914-18. There was the same despairing cry of overproduction after each boom. Even after the crisis of 1931, Mr. Neville Chamberlain was shaping his policy to capture the sellers' market when trade revived.

THE BEST MEMORIAL

"**S**ELDOM has the Christian principle of forgiving one's enemies had a better application than was given it recently, when it became known that the parents of an American soldier killed in battle with the Japanese on Luzon had set aside his 10,000 dollar G.I. insurance policy to educate a former enemy in their son's college.

"Private Robert Johnstone, 18, was sent to the Philippines in 1945. He died there in one of the final struggles of the American-Japanese war.

"As a memorial to their young son, Robert's parents gave the full amount of his government insurance to his school, Lafayette College, to establish a scholarship. They specified that recipients of the scholarship were to be Orientals, and, if possible, Japanese.

"The first recipient has been announced: Robert Nishiyama, a young ex-pilot in the Kamikaze air-men's corp, whose home is in Tokyo. He has not yet obtained clearance from the military authorities to come to America, but will come as soon as permitted. 'I want to try my best to repay Mr. and Mrs. Johnstone for the loss of their son,' he said when he was informed he had been awarded the scholarship. 'I can do this only by giving my small bit toward establishing good will between our two countries.'

"These are strange and moving words to come from a suicide pilot trained to wreak revenge on his enemy even at the cost of his own life. They represent the beginning of the miracle of reconciliation. That miracle comes to pass when the all too rare virtue of forgiveness finds expression, as it does in this instance, across the barriers erected by the passions and suspicions of pagan nationalism.

—The Christian Century, Chicago.

Wilfred Wellock is right. No Government can weather this crisis by restoring the foundations of our national life, but only by trying a new way of life. Thus, I hope we will devote our time now to showing a bewildered people that the crisis is not due to the failure of either the present or past Governments.

Over 100 years ago, Richard Cobden was promising the artisans of Norwich that if only they would adopt his way of life — Free Trade — they would be able to eat as well as Americans eat. We did adopt the Cobden way of life—unrestricted competition; and now we apparently can only eat by the kindness of America. I am all for the Wellock approach to the problem of the national life.

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COMMENTARY CONTINUED

organisation, Socialists, and Liberals must stand or fall together."

Liberals, of course, in this context does not mean members of the Liberal party; but all defenders of the political free society. The author of the article, Mr. G. L. Arnold, is objecting as vehemently as I do to the scandalous misrepresentation of the American policy towards Turkey and Greece by the "fellow-travellers" in the Labour Party. Mr. Zilliacus is responsible for a fine specimen in the New Statesman (Ap. 5). He denounces "the reactionary and warmongering policy openly proclaimed by Truman"; and continues: "I object passionately to our young men being conscript cannon fodder for Wall Street's campaign against World Socialism."

The danger of moral decay

THAT strikes me as positively vicious—a betrayal of the fundamental principles of democracy and socialism. To equate the spread of "world socialism" with the extension of the sphere of influence of Soviet Russia is a moral equivocation that makes my gorge rise. Socialism which suppresses the inviolable freedoms of the free society is plain tyranny. Yet the number of people in the Labour Party who are sedulously engaged in glozing over this ugly fact is disquieting. It gives the impression that there is danger of a real decay in the moral sense of the British people, so that they may become incapable of distinguishing between plain right and wrong.

Anyway, I am grateful to Mr. Arnold for his statement that Socialists and "liberals"—who include all the Tories that I have met—"must stand or fall together in maintaining those conditions of freedom which alone make possible the growth of higher forms of social organisation." This is the most important truth of all. Socialism without political freedom is humbug—and worse: for political freedom is the only guarantee that the "economic freedoms" promised by Socialism do not turn out to be sheer enslavements. Once that guarantee is gone, the beneficiaries of pseudo-Socialist dictatorship are prevented from passing judgment on whether they are benefited or not.

U.N. not to be ignored

IT is significant that the most serious form the American opposition to the Truman policy has assumed is in the criticism that it by-passes the United Nations. In consequence, Senator Vandenberg, the chief Republican supporter of the new policy, has had an amendment inserted in the Government measure which provides that the American aid may be withdrawn (apparently "may" not "shall")—

"If the President is officially notified by the United Nations that the Security Council finds—with regard to which finding the United States waives exercise of the veto—or that the General Assembly finds, that the action taken or the assistance furnished by the United Nations makes continuance of such assistance unnecessary or undesirable." (Times, Ap. 5).

The New York Times truly says that this amendment "goes far beyond the simple satisfaction of the American desire to act within the United Nations." It is all the better for that. Indeed, it is an exemplary amendment. If Russia were to treat the United Nations with the same deference, there would be some hope for the world. Incidentally, it well and truly knocks the bottom out of Mr. Zilliacus' clap-trap that the Truman policy is directed against UNO. It is now manifestly an attempt to prevent UNO from continuing to be a sinister farce, by which Russia inhibits all positive action.

APRIL—JUNE NUMBER

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"HELLO HAMBURG"

Pacifists exchange greetings over re-opened phone link

THE recent announcement that the telephone service had been re-opened between Gt. Britain and Germany prompted our desire to establish living contact with pacifist Germany, and to enable friends over there to hear a representative voice of the International and British pacifist movement sending a message of solidarity.

On Saturday night, April 5, the War Resisters' International took advantage of a suggestion from Peace News and rang up the Secretary of one of the sections of the German movement, Dr. Theodor Michaltscheff, of Hamburg.

The continental operator seemed surprised when Grace Beaton, Secretary of the WRI, asked for Hamburg 44 - 76 - 25. In fact he could scarcely believe the request, for he asked for it to be repeated. "I hope you are prepared to wait a long time," was his comment, "and I can only say that I hope you will get through!" "I will wait," was the Secretary's reply, and she went back to her desk prepared to wait many hours. Within five minutes the telephone at Laburnum 1686 rang, and expecting one of the many calls which come into the International Headquarters, Grace Beaton quietly lifted the receiver. Her calm, however, was quickly turned to excitement when the operator remarked, "Your call to Hamburg, Laburnum."

A THRILLING MOMENT

It was indeed a thrilling moment waiting to hear the voice of Dr. Michaltscheff—but in less than a minute the contact was made, and it was as though Germany were indeed in the room instead of being separated by miles of sea and land, and many bad man-made barriers. The isolation which our German friends have felt so keenly was at last broken in at least one town.

It took some time for Dr. Michaltscheff to realise that he was really speaking to England and that the message being spoken to him was one of greeting from the world-wide movement to him and his friends in Germany. It is difficult to express his surprise and his pleasure. Both Grace Beaton and Runham Brown talked to him of Germany and the work he was doing. He emphasised the especial pleasure they had received from the application for membership of many University students: the first University Students War Resisters' Movement, he announced, had been formed in Hamburg itself. Following this lead other University groups are now in course of formation in Cologne and Munich.

Dr. Michaltscheff also reported that the German sections affiliated to the International in Berlin, Cologne, Aachen, Dortmund and Freiburg are rapidly seeking to co-ordinate their work. In order to stabilise the movement in Germany, a preliminary conference has been called for June next, when our German friends hope that the foundation will be laid for a War Resisters' Movement for the whole of Germany.

Pressing invitations were given to Grace Beaton and Runham Brown to attend the Conference, and especially to visit the many local groups springing up everywhere. Dr. Michaltscheff announced that he had received an amazing number of invitations for the Secretaries of the International to meet German pacifists, and that hospitality was offered on all sides. Dr. Michaltscheff was so anxious to speak of the desire of our German friends to work with us again that it was difficult to get him to speak of the every-day difficulties of life in Germany which all our friends are experiencing. Most people are still hungry, all are still badly clothed, but he made light of these troubles, almost dismissing them as unimportant compared with the big task the German movement has before it.

His last message was an appeal for understanding and comradeship, and the International Secretary assured him wholeheartedly that these would be gladly and willingly given by the many friends in England and abroad who would hear his message.

AUSTRIANS WILL RESIST MILITARY CONSCRIPTION

IT was in 1928. The great hall of the Arbeitergebäude in Vienna was packed to suffocation in the summer heat. This was the first great public meeting of the War Resisters' International to be held in Austria. On the platform behind a very long table with a snow-white cloth sat the Council of the WRI, with Frau Olga Misar, as chairman, in the centre. On her right hand was one who was unknown to me—tall and erect with pale earnest face. A friend whispered "Ude"; so this was Professor Johannes Ude, the Catholic priest of Graz, who had so often raised his powerful voice against war and violence.

When Dr. Ude rose to speak there was a silence and then a few hisses—the Socialist workers of Vienna did not welcome this priest from the stronghold of clerical reaction. Interruptions from the body of the hall began to grow until it was difficult for the speaker to continue. Suddenly Ude stopped, and then in a quiet voice came these words: "You do not understand, I am so lonely." For a moment the large audience hesitated, then it rose to its feet as one man and cheered; they had not understood the priest of God was so lonely in his church, but he had courage.

Professor Ude has since passed through prison and concentration camp, now again he writes:—

Dear Gesinnungsfreund Brown,

I sincerely hope that you have enjoyed Christmas by the Grace of Him who alone can give the world peace. The world does not know such a peace. How things are here with our poor bleeding, crushed and hungry Austria you may gather from this letter which I have addressed to the Austrian Friedensgesellschaft (in English we should say "National Peace Council"). We have celebrated the feast of "Glory be to God on high and Peace and Good Will to all men," but there is no peace on earth, the enemies of peace are active—they re-arm all over the world; I therefore feel the urge to send out this call. It is not because a great power like the USA intends to re-introduce conscription that I am writing. Of course it would be of vital importance to mobilise the whole world against conscription because military conscription is immoral and an insult to the Rights of Man, a blow to democracy.

The reason which prompts me to write, is the fact that our Chancellor intends to reorganise in our poor bleeding and crushed Austria a new Bundesheer (Federal Army) stressing the need for Austria to create its own armed forces.

It is said that there is no financial difficulty as the former Bundesheer only cost about 6% of the Budget, that is five times less than the occupying forces.

When reading this I became very angry, but great sadness followed in its place. I cannot conceive how anybody can dare to sacrifice our Nation and people to militarism again. That one can dare to organise for another mass murder of human-beings, and this even at a time when we feel and are witnessing the effect of the total war just ended. For the reconstruction no money is available, but "there are no financial difficulties" to put another Bundesheer on its feet again!

So writes a great champion of peace and liberty. In the coming Treaty Austria's request to reconstruct her army and re-introduce military conscription is granted. How long will the people of the world tolerate such folly and wickedness?

H. RUNHAM BROWN.

Ten Years Ago

From Peace News, April 10, 1937

Proposals to spend about £8 millions on strengthening the defences of Hong-Kong were revealed on April 2.

The masses are far better educated in these days, and the more any attempt is made to drag them the more are they likely to react and think out for themselves problems which deeply affect them.

—Lord Ponsonby.

The first specifically pacifist meeting ever organized for members of the Church of England, held in the Central Hall, Westminster, on Monday evening, under the chairmanship of Canon H. R. L. Sheppard, deplored "the attempts made at the Church Assembly to reconcile the teachings of Christ with the practice of war," and urged "all members of the Church to maintain that war is essentially evil and as such incapable of advancing the kingship of Christ."

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